

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 5453

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 7)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UR

SUBJECT: THE SOVIET CONCEPT OF "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE"

REF: A. USNATO 2017; B. USNATO 2091; C. MOSCOW 5066

1. EMBASSY HAS SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SOVIET CONCEPT OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WHICH MAY BE OF USE TO THE DEPARTMENT OR USNATO IN THE NATO STUDY EXERCISE (REF A).

2. SOVIET LEADERS HAVE USED THE TERM "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" WITH VARYING DEGREES OF EMPHASIS SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE SOVIET STATE. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, IT HAS UNDERGONE NO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE IN MEANING DURING THIS TIME. THE TERM ITSELF CONNOTES THE EXISTENCE OF TWO IRRECONCILABLY DIFFERENT SYSTEMS WHICH BECAUSE OF THEIR DIFFERENCE CAN BE EXPECTED TO SEEK OPPOSING GOALS; THE CONCEPT OF STRUGGLE IS THEREFORE
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IMPLICIT IN IT.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO'S FOREWORD TO THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED "FOREIGN POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION" (SIGNED TO PRESS JANUARY 29, 1975) EXPLAINS THE CONCEPT: "SOCIALISM CANNOT ACHIEVE VICTORY SIMULTANEOUSLY IN ALL COUNTRIES. ACCORDINGLY, THERE WILL UNAVOIDABLY BE A PERIOD OF TIME DURING WHICH TWO DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS WILL EXIST...BUT WHAT KIND OF COEXISTENCE WILL THIS BE--PEACEFUL OR NOT PEACEFUL?... "PEACE IS NECESSARY FOR THE CONSTANTLY GROWING MATERIAL AND INTELLECTUAL NEEDS OF THE WORKERS...IN PEACEFUL CONDITIONS IT IS EASIER TO DEVELOP THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES AS WELL AS THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF SUPPRESSED PEOPLES, AND TO ACHIEVE SOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS. A SOCIALIST STATE IS THEREFORE OBJECTIVELY INTERESTED IN THE PRESERVATION OF PEACE, AND INTERESTED IN NOT ONLY THE ABSENCE OF WAR, BUT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BROAD ECONOMIC TIES WITH OTHER STATES." GROMYKO NOTES FURTHER: "THE CLASS STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS...IN THE SPHERES OF ECONOMICS, POLITICS, AND, INDISPUTABLY, IDEOLOGY, WILL CONTINUE, SINCE THE WELTANSCHAUUN AND THE CLASS GOALS OF SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM ARE CONTRADICTORY AND IRRECONCILABLE. BUT THE SOVIET UNION...IS STRIVING TO ENSURE THAT THIS HISTORICALLY INEVITABLE STRUGGLE PROCEEDS IN FORMS WHICH DO NOT THREATEN MANKIND WITH DANGEROUS CONFLICTS AND DESTRUCTIVE WARS." HE ALSO NOTES ELSEWHERE IN THE FOREWORD (AND BY IMPLICATION THIS IS ALSO PART OF THE SOVIET CONCEPT OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE) THAT "ACTIVE ASSISTANCE" TO "PROGRESSIVE" AND NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IS "ONE OF THE MAIN TASKS OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION."

4. THE SOVIET UNDERSTANDING OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IS THUS, IN A NUTSHELL, AVOIDANCE OF WAR AGAINST, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH, THE CAPITALIST WORLD; AND AT THE SAME TIME A CONTINUATION OF THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE AND "ACTIVE ASSISTANCE" TO "PROGRESSIVE" AND "NATIONAL LIBERATION" MOVEMENTS. THE APPARENT CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THE TWO PARTS OF THE FORMULA DOES NOT BOTHER THE SOVIETS. AS IMPLIED IN THE LEBEDEV ARTICLE IN PRAVDA APRIL 8, THE CONTRADICTION IS INHERENT IN THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM, AND MOREOVER IS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE THE DYNAMIC FOR FURTHER DIALECTICAL

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DEVELOPMENT TO A NEW STAGE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

5. THE DEFINITION OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE CONTAINED IN THE WILSON COMMUNIQUE IS NOT NEW, AS POINTED OUT IN THE EXCELLENT DUTCH STUDY (REF B). FURTHERMORE, WE NOTE THAT A SIMILAR DEFINITION APPEARED IN THE BIJEDIC COMMUNIQUE (PRAVDA APRIL 16)M. WHILE THE YUGOSLAVS NO DOUBT BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE DEALT A SMALL BLOW TO THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE, THE SOVIETS

ARE CERTAIN TO DENY ANY SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS AND THE USUAL DEFINITION, SINCE THEY CONSIDER THAT THE CONCEPT OF "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" APPLYING ONLY TO RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES WITH DIFFERING SOCIAL SYSTEMS IS IMPLICIT IN THE TERM ITSELF.

6. CHINA IS A SPECIAL CASE. IN RECENT YEARS THE SOVIETS HAVE ALSO USED "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" TO DESCRIBE THE RELATIONSHIP THEY HOPE TO ESTABLISH WITH THE CHINESE. THIS INDICATES TO US THAT THEY DO NOT CATEGORIZE THE PRC (OR ALBANIA) AMONG THOSE STATES WITH WHOM IT IS CURRENTLY POSSIBLE TO HAVE "FRATERNAL" RELATIONS. BOTH COUNTRIES ARE CONSISTENTLY LISTED AS NOT ONLY BEING IN A DIFFERENT CATEGORY THAN THE "FRATERNAL SOCIALIST STATES," AND INDEED AS BEING OPPOSED TO THESE STATES. THE PRAVDA LEADER ON APRIL 18, 1975, FOR EXAMPLE, ACCUSES THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT OF CONDUCTING "A POLICY HOSTILE TO THE SOVIET UNION AND TO THE OTHER FRATERNAL SOCIALIST STATES, AS WELL AS TO ALL FRATERNAL PARTIES WHICH BASE THEIR ACTIONS ON MARXIST-LENINIST PRINCIPLES." THOUGH OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON THE CURRENT NATURE OF CHINESE SOCIETY ARE RARE, WE HAVE NOTED THAT PRESS COMMENTARY AND LECTURE PRONOUNCEMENTS WAFFLE ON WHETHER THE PRC AND ALBANIA ARE ANY LONGER TO BE CONSIDERED EVEN "SOCIALIST."

7. IN SOVIET EYES, PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IS THE BEST POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP THAT CAN BE ACHIEVED BETWEEN A FRATERNAL SOCIALIST AND A CAPITALIST STATE DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD WHEN TWO SUCH STATES MUST COEXIST. TWO SOCIALIST STATES, ON THE OTHER HAND, DO NOT "COEXIST;" THEIR RELATIONS ARE "OF A NEW TYPE" IN WHICH ARE INHERENT A NEW SET OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS (AS WAS DEMONSTRATED IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1968). BECAUSE OF THE SOVIET NEED TO ENSURE THAT ITS CLIENT STATES CONTINUE TO OBSERVE THESE RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SOVIETS WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY EXPLICIT STATEMENT EQUATING RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO "FRATERNAL SOCIALIST STATES" WITH THOSE BETWEEN A FRATERNAL SOCIALIST STATE AND A CAPITALIST STATE.

8. AS WE NOTED IN REF C, THE SOVIET PRESS OF LATE HAS BEEN EMPHASIZING THEIR TRADITIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AS THE BASIS FOR SOVIET UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE WEST.

9. DEPARTMENT REPEAT FURTHER AS DESIRED.
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